



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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September 16, 2008

ADOPTED
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

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SEP 16 2008

Dear Supervisors:

Sachi A. Hamai
SACHI A. HAMAI
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

RECOMMENDATION REGARDING ALLOCATION OF REWARD FUNDS
IN THE MATTER OF MIHRAN TOPOUZOGLOU
WHO WAS MURDERED DURING A ROBBERY
(ALL DISTRICTS) (3-VOTE)

SUBJECT

Approval of this recommendation will authorize the Executive Officer of the Board to distribute reward funds to the individuals who provided information to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department that led to the conviction of Alfredo Valenzuela Jr..

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

Approve the recommendation of the Reward Committee to distribute reward funds in amount of \$5,000 to Claimant No. 1 and \$5,000 to Claimant No. 2 for a total amount of \$10,000, to be paid from the Board's discretionary funds, to the individuals who provided information to law enforcement that led to the conviction of Alfredo Valenzuela Jr., the person responsible for the murder and robbery of Mihran Topouzoglou on Thursday, June 1, 2006, in front of his residence on the 19000 block of East Avenue S in Llano.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

On June 20, 2006, on motion of Supervisor Antonovich, your Board offered a \$10,000 reward for information relating to the murder and robbery of Mihran Topouzoglou on Thursday, June 1, 2006, in front of his residence on the 19000 block of East Avenue S in Llano. The filing period to submit a claim to the Executive Office for the reward money expired on November 17, 2006.

On October 12, 2006, the Executive Office of the Board received a claim for the \$10,000 reward from the Sheriff's Department on behalf two Claimants who wish to remain anonymous. In accordance with provisions of the County Code, Title 4 – Revenue and Finance relating to rewards, your Board must now consider the claims and make a final determination for distribution of the reward funds.

A panel of individuals representing the Sheriff, Chief Executive Officer, County Counsel and the Executive Officer of the Board met and reviewed the claim filed for the reward funds. The panel is recommending that the reward funds in total amount of \$10,000 be awarded as follows: \$5,000 to Claimant No. 1 and \$5,000 to Claimant No. 2.

The chronological events in this case are as follows:

- On June 1, 2006, Mihran Topouzoglou was discovered shot and killed in front of his residence on the 19000 block of East Avenue S in Llano. Additionally, his truck and other items such as two Panasonic DVX100 cameras, two movie cameras and a diesel generator were also stolen.
- On June 20, 2006, the Board, on motion of Supervisor Antonovich, approved the establishment of a \$10,000 reward to encourage citizens to come forward and assist law enforcement in the investigation of the case.
- During the investigation of the case detectives interviewed the Claimants who witnessed the burning of the victim's stolen truck. During their investigation of the information provided by the Claimants, the detectives were able to positively identify the suspect, Alfredo Valenzuela Jr.. The detectives obtained a warrant on August 2, 2006, to search the residence of Mr. Valenzuela Jr., at which time the murder weapon was recovered.
- On August 9, 2006, the District Attorney officially charged Mr. Valenzuela Jr., who was already in custody for a domestic violence case, with Murder [Penal Code Section 187(a)], Personally discharging a firearm with the intent to kill [Penal Code Section 12022.53(d)], Personally discharging a firearm [Penal Code Section 12022.53(d)], and Personally armed with a firearm [Penal Code Section 12022.53(b)].
- On October 12, 2006, based on the information provided by the Claimants and evidence obtained the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department filed a claim on behalf of the Claimants with the Executive Office of the Board.

- On June 6, 2008, Mr. Valenzuela Jr. was convicted on all four charges and sentenced to a term of 50 years-to-life, due to the information provided by the Claimants which lead to the arrest, as well as their testimony during the trial on April 23, 2008.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

Approval of the above recommendation supports the County Strategic Goal of Service Excellence. Publication in local newspapers and posting of reward notices on the County website may encourage persons to provide information to law enforcement, which could lead to the arrest and/or conviction of the individuals who commit crimes, thereby improving the quality of life to residents of Los Angeles County by removing such individuals from the community.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The Board of Supervisors established a \$10,000 reward fund. Pursuant to provisions in the County Code, the reward is to be paid from the Board of Supervisors' discretionary funds in equal shares of \$2,000 from each member's account.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

In 1993, the Board of Supervisors adopted an amendment to the County Code establishing procedures for offering cash rewards for information leading to the apprehension and/or conviction of persons guilty of criminal acts. Your Board, from time to time has offered such rewards to encourage citizens to come forward and assist law enforcement with their investigations.

The action recommended is in compliance with the County Code, Title 4 - Revenue and Finance relating to rewards; and specifically Section 4.50.010B which states, "conviction of the person or persons responsible for the crime shall be required for payment of a reward unless the Board of Supervisors makes a finding of impossibility of conviction due to the death or incapacity of such person or persons."

The Notice of Reward Offered was posted on the Board of Supervisors' website and published in the Antelope Valley Press. In addition, copies were provided to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
September 16, 2008
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IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

There is no impact on current County services.

Respectfully submitted,


SACHI A. HAMAI
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

SAH:am

c: Sheriff
Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Acting Auditor-Controller

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